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*A mutineer is a person who openly rebels against authority. You must have read of soldiers rising in mutiny but have you ever heard of an elephant becoming a mutineer? Well, this is the story of just such an elephant. His name is Leonardo. He is as intelligent, as loyal and loving as anyone of us, yet he rebels. Read the story and find out why he becomes a mutineer, what he does and how he ceases to be a mutineer.*

*Once upon a time there was a coffee-planter in India who wished to clear some forest land for coffee-planting. When he had cut down all the trees and burned the under-wood the stumps still remained. Dynamite is expensive and slow-fire slow. The happy medium for stump-clearing is the lord of all beasts, who is the elephant. He will either push the stump out of the ground with his tusks, if he has any, or drag it out with*

*ropes. The planter, therefore, hired elephants by ones and twos and threes, and fell to work. The very best of all the elephants belonged to the very worst of all the drivers or mahouts; and the superior beast's name was Leonardo. He was the absolute property of his mahout, which would never have been the case under native rule, for Leonardo was a creature to be desired by kings; and his name, being translated, meant the Pearl Elephant. Because the British Government was in*

*the land, Ram , the mahout, enjoyed his property undisturbed. He was dissipated. When he had made much money through the strength of his elephant, he would get extremely drunk and give Leonardo a beating with a tent-peg over the tender nails of the forefeet. Leonardo never trampled the life out of Ram on these occasions, for he knew that after the beating was over Ram would embrace his trunk and weep and call him his love and his life and the liver of his soul, and*

*give him some liquor. Leonardo was very fond of liquor--arrack for choice, though he would drink palm- tree toddy if nothing better offered. Then Ram would go to sleep between Leonardo forefeet, and as Ram generally chose the middle of the public road, and as Leonardo mounted guard over him and would not permit horse, foot, or cart to pass by, traffic was congested till Leonardo saw fit to wake up.*

*There was no sleeping in the daytime on the planter's clearing: the wages were too high to risk. Ram sat on Leonardo neck and gave him orders, while Leonardo rooted up the stumps--for he owned a magnificent pair of tusks; or pulled at the end of a rope--for he had a magnificent pair of shoulders, while Ram kicked him behind the ears and said he was the king of elephants. At evening time Leonardo would wash down his three hundred pounds' weight of green*

*food with a quart of arrack, and Ram would take a share and sing songs between Leonardo legs till it was time to go to bed. Once a week Ram led Leonardo down to the river, and Leonardo lay on his side luxuriously in the shallows, while Ram went over him with a coir-swab and a brick. Leonardo never mistook the pounding blow of the latter for the smack of the former that warned him to get up and turn over on the other side. Then Ram would look at his feet, and*

*examine his eyes, and turn up the fringes of his*

*mighty ears in case of sores or budding*

*ophthalmic. After inspection, the two would*

*'come up with a song from the sea,' Leonardo all*

*black and shining, waving a torn tree branch*

*twelve feet long in his trunk, and Ram knotting*

*up his own long wet hair.*

*It was a peaceful, well-paid life till Ram felt the*

*return of the desire to drink deep. He wished for*



*an orgie. The little draughts that led nowhere  
were taking the manhood out of him.*

*He went to the planter, and 'My mother's dead,'  
said he, weeping.*

*'She died on the last plantation two months ago;  
and she died once before that when you were  
working for me last year,' said the planter, who  
knew something of the ways of nativedom.*

*'Then it's my aunt, and she was just the same as a mother to me,' said Ram, weeping more than ever. 'She has left eighteen small children entirely without bread, and it is I who must fill their little stomachs,' said Ram, beating his head on the floor.*

*'Who brought you the news?' said the planter.*

*'The post' said Ram.*

*'There hasn't been a post here for the past week.*

*Get back to your lines!'*

*'A devastating sickness has fallen on my village,*

*and all my wives are dying,' yelled Ram, really in*

*tears this time.*

*'Call Danish, who comes from Ram's village,' said*

*the planter.' Danish, has this man a wife?'*

*'He!' said Danish. 'No. Not a woman of our*

*village would look at him. They'd sooner marry*

*the elephant.' Danish snorted. Ram wept and*

*bellowed.*

*'You will get into a difficulty in a minute,' said*

*the planter.' Go back to your work!'*

*'Now I will speak Heaven's truth' gulped Ram,*

*with an inspiration. 'I haven't been drunk for two*

*months. I desire to depart in order to get*

*properly drunk afar off and distant from this*

*heavenly plantation. Thus I shall cause no*

*trouble.'*

*A flickering smile crossed the planter's face.*

*'Ram,' said he, 'you've spoken the truth, and I'd*

*give you leave on the spot if anything could be*

*done with Leonardo while you're away. You  
know that he will only obey your orders.'*

*'May the Light of the Heavens live forty  
thousand years. I shall be absent but ten little  
days. After that, upon my faith and honour and  
soul, I return. As to the inconsiderable interval,  
have I the gracious permission of the Heaven-  
born to call up Leonardo?'*

*Permission was granted, and, in answer to Ram's shrill yell, the lordly tusker swung out of the shade of a clump of trees where he had been squirting dust over himself till his master should return.*

*'Light of my heart, Protector of the Drunken, Mountain of Might, give ear,' said Ram, standing in front of him.*

*Leonardo gave ear, and saluted with his trunk. 'I  
am going away,' said Ram.*

*Leonardo eyes twinkled. He liked jaunts as well  
as his master. One could snatch all manner of  
nice things from the roadside then.*

*'But you, you fubsy old pig, must stay behind  
and work.'*



*The twinkle died out as Leonardo tried to look  
delighted. He hated stump-hauling on the  
plantation. It hurt his teeth.*

*'I shall be gone for ten days, O Delectable One.*

*Hold up your near forefoot and I'll impress the*

*fact upon it, warty toad of a dried mud- puddle.'*

*Ram took a tent-peg and banged Leonardo ten*

*times on the nails. Leonardo grunted and*

*shuffled from foot to foot.*

*'Ten days,' said Ram, 'you must work and haul*

*and root trees as Danish here shall order you.*

*Take up Danish and set him on your neck!'*

*Leonardo curled the tip of his trunk, Danish put*

*his foot there and was swung on to the neck.*

*Ram handed Danish the heavy ankus, the iron*

*elephant- goad.*

*Danish thumped Leonardo's bald head as a*

*paviour thumps a kerbstone.*

*Leonardo trumpeted.*

*'Be still, hog of the backwoods. Danish's your*

*mahout for ten days. And now bid me good-bye,*

*beast after mine own heart. Oh, my lord, my*

*king! Jewel of all created elephants, lily of the  
herd, preserve your honoured health; be  
virtuous. Adieu!'*

*Leonardo lapped his trunk round Ram and  
swung him into the air twice. That was his way  
of bidding the man good-bye.*

*'He'll work now,' said Ram to the planter. 'Have I  
leave to go?'*

*The planter nodded, and Ram dived into the woods. Leonardo went back to haul stumps.*

*Danish was very kind to him, but he felt unhappy and forlorn notwithstanding. Danish gave him balls of spices, and tickled him under the chin, and Danish's little baby cooed to him after work was over, and Danish's wife called him a darling; but Leonardo was a bachelor by*

*instinct, as Ram was. He did not understand the domestic emotions. He wanted the light of his universe back again--the drink and the drunken slumber, the savage beatings and the savage caresses.*

*None the less he worked well, and the planter wondered. Ram had vagabonded along the roads till he met a marriage procession of his*

*own caste and, drinking, dancing, and tippling,  
had drifted past all knowledge of the lapse of  
time.*

*The morning of the eleventh day dawned, and  
there returned no Ram. Leonardo was loosed  
from his ropes for the daily stint. He swung  
clear, looked round, shrugged his shoulders, and*

*began to walk away, as one having business*

*elsewhere.*

*'Hi! ho! Come back, you,' shouted Danish. 'Come*

*back, and put me on your neck, Misborn*

*Mountain. Return, Splendour of the Hillsides.*

*Adornment of all India, heave to, or I'll bang*

*every toe off your fat fore-foot!'*



*Leonardo gurgled gently, but did not obey.*

*Danish ran after him with a rope and caught him up. Leonardo put his ears forward, and Danish knew what that meant, though he tried to carry it off with high words.*

*'None of your nonsense with me,' said he. 'To your pickets, Devil-son.'*

*'Hrrump!' said Leonardo, and that was all--that  
and the forebent ears.*

*Leonardo put his hands in his pockets, chewed a  
branch for a toothpick, and strolled about the  
clearing, making jest of the other elephants, who  
had just set to work.*

*Danish reported the state of affairs to the  
planter, who came out with a dog-whip and*

*cracked it furiously. Leonardo paid the white*

*man the compliment of charging him nearly a*

*quarter of a mile across the clearing and*

*'Hrrumping' him into the verandah. Then he*

*stood outside the house chuckling to himself,*

*and shaking all over with the fun of it, as an*

*elephant will.*

*'We'll thrash him,' said the planter. 'He shall have the finest thrashing that ever elephant received. Give Kala Nag and Nazim twelve foot of chain apiece, and tell them to lay on twenty blows.'*

*Kala Nag--which means Black Snake--and Nazim were two of the biggest elephants in the lines, and one of their duties was to administer the*

*graver punishments, since no man can beat an elephant properly.*

*They took the whipping-chains and rattled them in their trunks as they sidled up to Leonardo, meaning to hustle him between them. Leonardo had never, in all his life of thirty-nine years, been whipped, and he did not intend to open new experiences. So he waited, weaving his head*

*from right to left, and measuring the precise spot in Kala Nag's fat side where a blunt tusk would sink deepest. Kala Nag had no tusks; the chain was his badge of authority; but he judged it good to swing wide of Leonardo at the last minute, and seem to appear as if he had brought out the chain for amusement. Nazim turned round and went home early. He did not feel*

*fighting-fit that morning, and so Leonardo was left standing alone with his ears cocked.*

*That decided the planter to argue no more, and Leonardo rolled back to his inspection of the clearing. An elephant who will not work, and is not tied up, is not quite so manageable as an eighty-one ton gun loose in a heavy sea-way. He slapped old friends on the back and asked them*

*if the stumps were coming away easily; he talked  
nonsense concerning labour and the inalienable  
rights of elephants to a long 'nooning'; and,  
wandering to and fro, thoroughly demoralized  
the garden till sundown, when he returned to his  
pickets for food.*



*'If you won't work you shan't eat,' said Danish  
angrily. 'You're a wild elephant, and no educated  
animal at all. Go back to your jungle.'*

*Danish's little brown baby, rolling on the floor of  
the hut, stretched its fat arms to the huge  
shadow in the doorway. Leonardo knew well that  
it was the dearest thing on earth to Danish. He  
swung out his trunk with a fascinating crook at*

*the end, and the brown baby threw itself*

*shouting upon it. Leonardo made fast and pulled*

*up till the brown baby was crowing in the air*

*twelve feet above his father's head.*

*'Great Chief!' said Danish. 'Flour cakes of the*

*best, twelve in number, two feet across, and*

*soaked in rum shall be yours on the instant, and*

*two hundred pounds' weight of fresh-cut young*

*sugar-cane therewith. Deign only to put down*

*safely that insignificant brat who is my heart and*

*my life to me.'*

*Leonardo tucked the brown baby comfortably*

*between his forefeet, that could have knocked*

*into toothpicks all Danish's hut, and waited for*

*his food. He ate it, and the brown baby crawled*

*away. Leonardo dozed, and thought of Ram. One*

*of many mysteries connected with the elephant is that his huge body needs less sleep than anything else that lives. Four or five hours in the night suffice--two just before midnight, lying down on one side; two just after one o'clock, lying down on the other. The rest of the silent hours are filled with eating and fidgeting and long grumbling soliloquies.*

*At midnight, therefore, Leonardo strode out of his pickets, for a thought had come to him that Ram might be lying drunk somewhere in the dark forest with none to look after him. So all that night he chased through the undergrowth, blowing and trumpeting and shaking his ears. He went down to the river and blared across the shallows where Ram used to wash him, but there*

*was no answer. He could not find Ram, but he  
disturbed all the elephants in the lines, and  
nearly frightened to death some gypsies in the  
woods.*

*At dawn Ram returned to the plantation. He had  
been very drunk indeed, and he expected to fall  
into trouble for outstaying his leave. He drew a  
long breath when he saw that the bungalow and*

*the plantation were still uninjured; for he knew something of Leonardo's temper; and reported himself with many lies and salaams. Leonardo had gone to his pickets for breakfast. His night exercise had made him hungry.*

*'Call up your beast,' said the planter, and Ram shouted in the mysterious elephant-language, that some mahouts believe came from China at*

*the birth of the world, when elephants and not men were masters. Leonardo heard and came.*

*Elephants do not gallop. They move from spots at varying rates of speed. If an elephant wished*

*to catch an express train he could not gallop,*

*but he could catch the train. Thus Leonardo was*

*at the planter's door almost before Danish*

*noticed that he had left his pickets. He fell into*



*Ram's arms trumpeting with joy, and the man  
and beast wept and slobbered over each other,  
and handled each other from head to heel to see  
that no harm had befallen.*

*'Now we will get to work,' said Ram. 'Lift me up,  
my son and my joy.'*

*Leonardo swung him up and the two went to the  
coffee-clearing to look for irksome stumps.*

*The planter was too astonished to be very angry.*

## *L'ENVOI*

*My new-cut ashlar takes the light*

*Where crimson-blank the windows flare;*

*By my own work, before the night,*

*Great Overseer, I make my prayer.*

*If there be good in that I wrought,*

*Thy hand compelled it, Master, Thine;*

*Where I have failed to meet Thy thought*

*I know, through Thee, the blame is mine.*

*One instant's toil to Thee denied*

*Stands all Eternity's offence,*

*Of that I did with Thee to guide*

*To Thee, through Thee, be excellence.*

*Who, lest all thought of Eden fade,*

*Bring'st Eden to the craftsman's brain,*

*Godlike to muse o'er his own trade*

*And Manlike stand with God again.*

*The depth and dream of my desire,*

*The bitter paths wherein I stray,*

*Thou knowest Who hast made the Fire,*

*Thou knowest Who hast made the Clay.*

*One stone the more swings to her place*

*In that dread Temple of Thy Worth--*

*It is enough that through Thy grace*

*I saw naught common on Thy earth.*

*Take not that vision from my ken;*

*Oh whatso'er may spoil or speed,*

*Help me to need no aid from men*

*That I may help such men as need!*

*Summary:*

*When Ram the mahout wants to go on a drinking spree for ten days, he entrusts his beloved elephant Leonardo to another mahout for the period. The elephant is well aware of the number of days that he is to serve under his temporary master.*

*When Ram loses track of time and fails to show up on the eleventh morning, Leonardo enacts his own very effective protest.*